

STARTFORTH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL

OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDING

31st DECEMBER, 1945.

Dr. Alex Leishman, M.B., Ch.B.  
Medical Officer of Health,  
Barnard Castle.





Startforth Rural District Council.

Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report - 1945.

Barnard Castle.  
28th October, 1946.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Council,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my Report for the Year 1945.

Post-War conditions perpetuate, to a great extent, war time restrictions. This of necessity puts a brake on progress in some respects but the Council, I am sure, are looking forward to the day, not far distant I hope, when they can seriously tackle the urgent needs in Housing and General Sanitary Work, vigorously.

Despite the many adverse features in public life over a number of years, the health of the Community was reasonably good all round.

Notifiable diseases were rather more prevalent than in the previous year, almost entirely due to a seasonal epidemic of measles in the District generally and an epidemic of scarlet fever in a girl's school situated right out in a remote area of the District. Fortunately this epidemic was kept within the school. In the attempt to control it the services of the Emergency Public Health Laboratory at Northallerton were called upon.

There was also an increase in the number of cases of Tuberculosis notified during the year, from 2 last year to 4 this year. Three of these were pulmonary and one non-pulmonary. There was one death.

I am again much indebted to the Members of the Council and to the Clerk for their help at all times in the carrying out of my duties.

Statistics of the Area.

Area (Acres)	96305
Population (estimated)	4050
Number of inhabited houses	1265
Rateable Value	£55198
Sum represented by a penny rate	£229

The chief industry of the Area is Agriculture, principally milk production and sheep farming.

Vital Statistics

Live Births:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	40	35	75
Illegitimate	-	2	2
	40	37	77

Live Birth Rate 19.01 per 1,000 of the population.  
Corresponding rate for England and Wales 16.1 and for the 148 smaller Towns (Resident Population 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census)- 19.2.

Still Births.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	2	1	3
Illegitimate	-	-	-
	2	1	3



Still Birth Rate per 1,000 births 38.9 or .74 per 1000 of the population.  
Corresponding Rate for England and Wales .46 and for the 148 smaller towns .53

Deaths.

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total</u>
	24	24	48
Death Rate per 1,000 of the Population			11.8
" " for England and Wales			11.4
" " for 148 smaller Towns			13.8

Deaths of Infants under 1 year.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	4	3	7
Illegitimate	-	-	-
	4	3	7

Death Rate of Infants under 1 year :  
All Infants per 1,000 Live Births 90  
England and Wales 46  
148 Smaller Towns 53

Causes of Deaths

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tuberculosis	1	-	1
Cancer	4	3	7
Diabetes	1	-	1
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	2	6	8
Heart Diseases	2	6	8
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	2	3	5
Bronchitis	1	-	1
Pneumonia	1	-	1
Nephritis	-	1	1
Premature Birth	2	1	3
Infantile Diseases	2	2	4
Violent Causes	3	-	3
All other causes	3	2	5
	24	24	48

Incidence of Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis).

<u>Civilian Cases.</u>		<u>Non-Civilian Cases.</u>	
Scarlet Fever	19	Scarlet Fever	6
Whooping Cough	20	Diphtheria	1
Measles	57	Cerebro Spinal Fever	1
Diphtheria	1	Dysentery	1
Pneumonia	1	Erysipilas	1
Total	98	Total	10

There were no deaths from any of these.

Incidence of Tuberculosis.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis	3	Tuberculosis of Gland	1
Total	4.		

There was one death from Pulmonary Tuberculosis.





### Diphtheria Immunisation.

The number of children who received a full course of immunisation were :

65 under five years of age.  
15 over 5 years and under 15 years.

The percentage of children immunised under 5 years of age is still far below what it ought to be if a safety level is to be attained.

### General Provision of Health Services.

Laboratory facilities for assisting practitioners in the diagnosis of certain infectious diseases and for allied purposes, is provided by the Emergency Public Health Laboratory, set up at Northallerton County Hall by the Medical Research Council in 1942.

Ambulance facilities are not yet what they ought to be but I understand the Council are making the necessary provision. I am informed there has been considerable delay in delivery of a vehicle suitable for cases other than infectious diseases.

"Nursing in the Home" is carried out in a highly efficient manner by six District Nursing Associations whose nurses also do part-time duty as Health Visitors under the County Council Scheme.

### Milk Production.

There are 372 dairy farms registered in the District. Of these 20 hold Designated Licences, 11 for the production of Tuberculosis Tested Milk and 9 for Accredited Milk.

### Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supply        -        Sewage Disposal        -        Housing.

These three vital needs have probably been the biggest casualties of war time. Thus far, they have been inevitable sufferers. They, together with Milk production, are beyond doubt the fundamental factors in determining the state of the public health in so far as that can be affected by public Authorities. The public Health therefore is the supreme function of this Council who thus assume a tremendous responsibility.

During the year under review the Council wisely undertook a complete Survey of Water Supplies and methods of Sewage Disposal in the various parts of the area with a view to determining their adequacy and states of repair. This was duly carried out most efficiently by Messrs D. Balfour and Sons, Consulting Engineers of Durham, who reported to the Council in November 1945. It was obvious from them that very drastic measures were necessary to meet the needs of the District in these two essential services.

The Council, again very wisely, adopted the Engineers' Report and approved their schemes for putting the many deficiencies in a proper state. A year has now gone by and it is sincerely to be hoped the Council will press forward these schemes of vital improvement as it is obvious that, in some parts of the area, until deficiencies in water and sewage are remedied, there will be the risk of a hold-up in the provision of houses, probably the most essential need of the present time.

I take it that the Sanitary Inspector will append his Report on the work of his Department during this year.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Members,  
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) Alex Leishman.  
Medical Officer of Health.





- Startforth Rural District Council -

To:

The Medical Officer of Health  
Startforth Rural District Council.

Re Annual Report for the Year ending 31st December 1945.

As I only took over the appointment of Sanitary Inspector on the 5th November 1945 I can only quote a few details:

Number of Preliminary Notices served	26
Number of Statutory Notices served	18
Number of houses inspected under the Housing Acts	63

Hutton Magna Water Supply

The existing 1" Main that supplied the village has been relayed with a 3" cement asbestos pipe. The 1" Main was worn out and an insufficient supply to the village existed. With the new main more than required has been obtained. It is now the Council's decision to carry the 3" Main through the village to the last house with the intention of each dwelling connecting and having a laid on supply, and abolish the standpipe.

Bowes Sewerage Disposal Works.

These have been modernised and by so doing we have abated the nuisance that existed.

Cotherstone Sewerage Disposal Works.

A new scheme is in hand for new works.

1944 Sewerage and Water Act.

All necessary action under this Act is being undertaken.

Yours obediently

(Sgd) T. Ashcroft

Sanitary Inspector.

